

## Community resources

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*courage is contagious*

## Viewing cable 06BEIRUT3014, UNHCR INVESTIGATION "CLOSING DOORS," MAKING

If you are new to these pages, please read an introduction on the [structure of a cable](#) as well as how to [discuss them](#) with others. See also the [FAQs](#)

### Understanding cables

Every cable message consists of three parts:

- The top box shows each cable's unique reference number, when and by whom it originally was sent, and what its initial classification was.
- The middle box contains the header information that is associated with the cable. It includes information about the receiver(s) as well as a general subject.
- The bottom box presents the body of the cable. The opening can contain a more specific subject, references to other cables ([browse by origin](#) to find them) or additional comment. This is followed by the main contents of the cable: a summary, a collection of specific topics and a comment section.

To understand the justification used for the classification of each cable, please use this [WikiSource](#) article as reference.

### Discussing cables

If you find meaningful or important information in a cable, please link directly to its unique reference number. Linking to a specific paragraph in the body of a cable is also possible by copying the appropriate link (to be found at the paragraph symbol). Please mark messages for social networking services like Twitter with the hash tags **#cablegate** and a hash containing the reference ID e.g. **#06BEIRUT3014**.

Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
<a href="#">06BEIRUT3014</a>	<a href="#">2006-09-18 10:17</a>	<a href="#">2011-08-30 01:44</a>	<a href="#">SECRET</a>	<a href="#">Embassy Beirut</a>

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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5642  
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E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/19/2026

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SUBJECT: UNIIIC INVESTIGATION "CLOSING DOORS," MAKING  
PROGRESS

Classified By: Ambassador Jeffrey D. Feltman for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

SUMMARY

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¶1. (S) Ambassador Feltman and econoff met on 16 September with UNIIIC head Serge Brammertz to discuss progress on the investigation ahead of the progress report due 29 September and UNIIIC investigator Peter Nicholson's visit to Washington later this month. Brammertz was preoccupied with the administrative requirements of UNIIIC, proud that the Hizballah-Israel conflict had not slowed progress in the investigation, optimistic about GOL plans to move forward quickly with a tribunal, and open about his plans to leave UNIIIC when his already extended term expires in December. While Brammertz did not preview the content of next report, he gave some detail about the process and progress of the investigation. End Summary.

CONFLICT HINDERED INVESTIGATION  
LESS THAN UN BUREAUCRACY  
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¶2. (C) Brammertz proudly announced that the conflict between Hizballah and Israel had not decreased Syrian or Lebanese cooperation or slowed progress in his investigation. Although Brammertz is still seeking security assurances, UNIIIC staff are slowly returning from Cyprus, where they were based during the conflict. The move should be completed by the end of September, but Brammertz plans to keep copies of the evidence and findings in Cyprus for security reasons. Surprisingly, he cited administrative issues as his largest obstacle, describing 30 to 40 percent of his time as spent on administrative issues such as hiring more investigators, finding adequate housing for his staff, and dealing with UN budget restrictions. He is currently operating without a Chief of Staff, but expects to have one beginning next week.

¶3. (S) Brammertz hopes the investigation can conclude by June 2007, but he expects that, realistically, it could take an additional 2 or 3 years. He cited a 20 percent vacancy rate at UNIIIC and an overwhelming number of investigative leads as reasons for the slow progress, but described the pace as similar to an investigation in Europe.

GOL SAY THEY ARE MOVING  
QUICKLY TOWARD A TRIBUNAL  
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¶4. (C) Some of Brammertz's efforts to increase his staff may be in preparation for the creation of a tribunal; using the existing investigative staff as the core of a tribunal, he said, would speed the transition. Brammertz reported that in his meeting with Prime Minister Siniora the previous day the PM said that he hopes to have Cabinet and Parliamentary approval for the tribunal before November, enabling implementation of the tribunal beginning early next year. While Bramertz saw no evidence that either the GOL or UN had made progress finding a location or funding for a tribunal, he reiterated his reasoning that an early transition to a tribunal would have a symbolic effect, even if he could at this point give only a 50 percent chance that the tribunal might end with a conviction. He cited the trial of Slobodan Milosevic in the former Yugoslavia as an example of a tribunal successfully run without the prior completion of an investigation.

BRAMMERTZ MOVING ON  
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¶5. (S) Brammertz said he will not seek a second extension of his term at UNIIIC, which ends on 31 December, another possible reason he is laying the administrative groundwork for transition to a tribunal early next year. While Bramertz will return to the ICC, he believes most of his staff will remain with UNIIIC. Asked by the Ambassador, he said that he could not expect member states of the ICC to tolerate his prolonged absence, and he is not prepared to resign from the ICC.

INVESTIGATION SPECIFICS:  
"CLOSING DOORS"  
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¶6. (S) Brammertz said that his next report will include "no revelations", but will show some progress as new evidence has confirmed some of UNIIIC's earlier conclusions and closed some avenues of investigation. Bramertz described how UNIIIC is gradually closing down some of its 20 simultaneous avenues of investigation through a focus on forensics, phone records, and media to link suspects. Brammertz described the importance forensic evidence from the perpetrator, describing how the "28 part man" has become the "32 part man," with the discovery of more body parts at the crime scene. Brammertz said new technology has increased the speed with which UNIIIC is able to trace phone records. Brammertz has used these phone records to pressure Syrian officials to admit relationships they have

previously lied about having. As he has before, he also eluded to a media connection, which he would not elaborate on. Brammertz was pleased to admit UNIIIC is "closing some doors," including its investigation of Bank Al-Medina. While Bank al-Medina touches many Syrian and Lebanese officials, Brammertz said, UNIIIC is only looking for links with the Hariri assassination.

¶7. (S) Brammertz said there has been no progress investigating the four generals already arrested. While there is still no solid evidence against General Jamil al-Sayyed, Brammertz believes that does not mean he was not involved or at least aware. He mentioned that Samir Shehadeh, the target of a car bomb attack on September 5, has had no contact with the current commission team, leading Brammertz to believe that his attempted assassination was motivated by a personal grudge or by Al-Qaida or a Palestinian organization.

LIMITED INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION  
-- FROM UNEXPECTED SOURCES  
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¶8. (C) Brammertz described Syrian cooperation as "generally satisfactory" and "cautiously positive." In particular he reported he has used phone records to pressure Syrian officials to admit relationships they have previously lied about having. However, Brammertz reported that he has not received answers to his request from nearly 50 percent of countries. Two unnamed European countries had been particularly problematic, he said. Brammertz expressed appreciation for US assistance.

FELTMAN